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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Food Distribution Administration
Washington 25, D. C.



July 15, 1943

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION MEMORANDUM NO. 32

To: Branch and Division Chiefs and Regional Administrators
From: F. J. Hughes, Chief, Administrative Services Division
Subject: Priority for Urgent Telephone Toll Calls

The Board of War Communications has issued an order classifying long distant telephone calls in the order of their importance to the war effort. The order of the Board is quoted in part as follows:

"Urgent toll calls placed with commercial telephone systems by the authorized persons or agencies designated in Paragraph 2 shall upon request be given priority over all other toll calls in accordance with the provisions of, and in the order set forth in sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) below:

"(a) Priority 1 shall be given to calls which require immediate completion for war purposes or to safeguard life or property and which relate to one or more of the following matters:

- (1) Arrangements for moving armed forces during combat operations.
- (2) Extremely urgent orders to armed forces.
- (3) Immediate dangers due to the presence of the enemy.
- (4) Hurricane, flood, earthquake or other disaster materially affecting the war effort or public security.

Where necessary for the immediate completion of a call having Priority 1, any conversation in process (other than one having Priority 1) may be interrupted.

"(b) Priority 2 shall be given to calls which require immediate completion for the national defense and security, the successful conduct of the war, or to safeguard life or property other than those specifically described in Paragraph (a).

"(c) Priority 3 shall be given to calls which require prompt completion for the national defense and security, the successful conduct of the war, or to safeguard life or property and which involve matters of the following type:

- (1) Important governmental functions.
- (2) Machinery, tools or raw materials for war plants.
- (3) Production of essential supplies.
- (4) Maintenance of essential public services.
- (5) Supply or movement of food.
- (6) Civilian defense or public health and safety.

"The following persons and agencies are designated as authorized persons or agencies entitled to use telephone toll priorities where such call is required in the manner and for a purpose specified above:

The President of the United States, the Vice President, Cabinet officers, Members of Congress, Army, Navy, Aircraft Warning Service, Federal, State and Municipal Government Departments and Agencies, Embassies, Legations, and Commissions of the United Nations, Civilian Defense Organizations, Red Cross, State and Home Guards, essential war industries, essential services such as communications, transportation, power, water, fuel, press associations, newspapers, and health and sanitation services.

"A record shall be kept by all telephone carriers of all priority calls, which record shall include the priority given and whether a conversation in process was interrupted. Such record shall be kept by the telephone carrier for two years after the date of the call.

"Within thirty days after the end of each calendar month, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company shall file with the Board a report for the Bell System Companies showing:

- "(a) The number of calls during the preceding calendar month given Priority 1, 2, and 3, and the number of calls given Priority 1 for which other calls were interrupted;
- "(b) periods of time required for completion of each class of priority calls.

"The telephone facilities of any subscriber who wilfully obtains or attempts to obtain priority for a toll call by fraudulently designating such call as a priority call or by furnishing false information to any telephone carriers for the purpose of obtaining a priority, shall be subject to closure, removal or other appropriate governmental action."

In accordance with the provisions of the Order, calls emanating from this Administration and entitled to priority will in most instances be of the Priority 3 class. Calls eligible for priority treatment should be placed in the normal manner, and in case delay is encountered you should notify the operator, stating "Priority 3", or whatever other priority classification is indicated. If you have calls which are eligible under the Order for Priority 1 treatment, those involving the most extreme emergencies, it is suggested that the operator be notified by saying "Priority 1" immediately upon placing the call.

It is important that the information contained in this Order be disseminated to all employees placing long distance telephone calls, in order that the plan may be most effective.



